

### Scene 3

Setting: Herman's home, several days later

*LIGHTS UP: The 3 children are huddled together on the couch with a raggedy blanket trying to keep warm. All the other furniture and objects are gone. Herman is looking for more things to sell.*

**Narrator:** Things continued to get worse! Soon, they had sold just about everything they owned. They had to get food and wood to keep warm! Herman was thinking he might have to beg in the street. There was a blizzard outside; it was Christmas Eve, and they had no presents for the children.

**Hans:** Papa, I'm very hungry!

**Gerta:** Mama, I'm very cold!

**Louisa:** I'm very hungry and very cold!

**Anya:** I know, children. Papa is trying to find something else to sell to get some food and wood.

**Hans:** Papa, you can sell my toy horse. I don't need it.

**Gerta:** And you can sell my toy bear. He's missing one eye, but he's still a lovely bear.

**Louisa:** Please take my rattle to sell, Papa. I'm getting too old for it anyway.

**Herman:** You dear children. I don't want to take your toys. Tomorrow is Christmas, and we have no money for presents, so I shouldn't take your only toys.

**Gerta:** It's okay papa. We want to help.

*(They give the toys to Herman. He and Anya look at each other, close to tears. They hug the children.)*

**Anya:** You are the best children in the whole world!

**Herman:** And we love you so very much!

**Hans:** Wait...I thought of one more thing! He goes behind the couch and brings back a beautiful bell. You can sell Dot cow's old bell. I polished it, and it is nice and shiny.

**Herman:** Great idea, Hans! When I bought that bell I was wealthy. It was when I first got Dot cow. This is a special bell. It is made of brass, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and has lovely designs scrolled on it.

**Louisa:** Surely someone will want to buy such a beautiful bell!

**Anya:** And then we will have food and heat for Christmas.

**Herman:** Thank you, everyone! I will be home as soon as I can.

*(Herman moves downstage again. House area is dark. Herman stands there trying to sell things. A few people go by, and he shows them things, but they say no, and exit. Herman looks progressively colder, less people come by, and they are ruder. Herman picks up the bell)*

**Herman:** I thought I would at least be able to sell this bell to buy some food...

**Narrator:** Just as Herman was about to give up and head home to tell his family the bad news, an old man came by.

*(St Nick wears a hat and long red coat with big pockets.)*

**St. Nicholas:** That's a beautiful bell you have there. If the reindeer that pulls my sleigh had a bell like that, I would be able to hear it and know what direction we are going in the storm. It would be perfect for me!

**Herman:** It's a very special bell with lovely designs, as you can see.

**St. Nicholas:** It is magnificent! I have no money, but would you trade it for this load of wood I have here.

**Narrator:** Herman thought and thought. The bell was worth much more than the wood, but the wood would at least keep his family warm, even if there was no food, and the old man needed the bell.

**Herman:** All right. You can have the bell, and I'll take the wood. Thank you, good sir. Now, I better get home to my family. This storm is looking worse.

**St. Nicholas:** I need to find shelter, too. I guess I can bunk with the reindeer in the cold, cold barn.

**Herman:** Oh no, you'll freeze to death! Please come home with me to my house. We don't have much, but with this wood, we will at least be warm.

**St. Nicholas:** That is very kind of you, sir.

**Herman:** I am...was a barber, so I can give you a nice trim, too, if you like.

**St. Nicholas:** Why, that would be wonderful. Thank you.